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FARM AND HOME HOUR

UNCLE SAM'S FOREST RANGERS - EPISODE #356

WMAQ BLUE

11:30-12:30

SEPTEMBER 22, 1939

FRIDAY



ANNOUNCER: Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers.

MUSIC: QUARTET, RANGERS' SONG.

ANNOUNCER: If you asked the average American taxpayer the simple question: "What is a Forest Ranger?" he will very likely say, "Oh, he's a fellow who wears a Stetson and rides a horse around over the mountains. He saves people when they get lost and fights forest fires." We do regret to rob you of this somewhat romantic idea but you may appreciate what we have to offer in exchange. So today, we bring a simple incident showing the relationship of a United States Forest Ranger and his work to the problems of people who are just ordinary folks like you and me. Our story takes place on the Pine Cone National Forest. It's a little past noon on Saturday when we arrive. Ranger Jim Robbins and assistant Ranger Jerry Quick are in the office of the ranger station -- Mary Halloway, the school teacher at Winding Creek, has dropped in on her way to see Mrs. Robbins --

JIM: I reckon you'll find Bess in the kitchen, Mary.

MARY: Thank you, Mr. Robbins.

JERRY: How's school going by now, Mary?

MARY: Oh, I enjoy getting back to work. And there's so much to do.

JIM: Well, whenever you need any help, just let me know and I'll leave Jerry in charge and go to work for you.



MARY: (LAUGHING) I know the children would enjoy it a lot.

JERRY: But I doubt if they'd learn much.

JIM: I didn't say I'd guarantee to teach them anything. (CHUCKLING)

JERRY: Gee, I remember how I used to hate to have school start in the fall.

MARY: Oh, I meant to ask you, Mr. Robbins, if you know anything about Billy Thompson. He hasn't come to school once since we started.

JIM: He hasn't?

MARY: Not once. And I haven't heard anything from his parents.

JIM: That's funny. I don't understand it.

JERRY: Why don't you ask his dad about it when you see him next time, Jim?

JIM: I haven't seen Big Bill for over a month.

MARY: Some of the children have said they know Billy isn't sick, because they've seen him riding his pony near the ranch.

JIM: By George, I don't make sense out of that -- I'll have a talk with his dad -- that is, if you want me to, Mary.

MARY: I do wish you would, Mr. Robbins.

JERRY: Today's Saturday. He ought to be in town somewhere, Jim.

JIM: Uhuh -- I was figuring on goin' down to the feed store some time today, and I reckon we oughta stop by Andy Goodman's --

(MUSIC UP AND SEGUE INTO STREET SOUNDS OF A COUNTRY TOWN: THE MURMUR OF THE SATURDAY TRADING CROWD MINGLED WITH THE SOUND OF WAGONS AND CARS.)





JERRY: Pretty good crowd in town today, Jim.

JIM: Doing their fall trading, I reckon.

JERRY: Business ought to be pretty good this winter.

JIM: By George, I hope so. Some of the folks around here have been hit pretty hard with the drought and the fires we had outside the forest --

JERRY: I'll say they have.

JIM: I wanta stop in here at Andy's. He said he thought that rope we ordered would get in today.

JERRY: Say, Jim, look. Here comes Billy up the street on his pony.

JIM: He is? Where?

JERRY: He's coming around that truck.

JIM: I see him -- Guess I'll have a little talk with him. He hasn't been around to see me for a long time now -- (CALLING)  
Hello, there, Billy.

JERRY: (PAUSE) He didn't hear you, Jim.

JIM: Hi there, Billy.

JERRY: He's looking this way.

JIM: Come over here a minute, Billy.

CLATTER OF HOOVES UP AND FADE:

JERRY: What did he do that for, Jim?

JIM: I don't know, son. He lit out around the corner of the store like he was shot at.

JERRY: I know he saw us standing here. And he couldn't help hearing you call to him.

JIM: I've never seen him do a trick like that before.



JERRY: Why, you and Billy have always been pretty good pals, I thought.

JIM: (CHUCKLING) That's what I always figured -- Well, let's go inside.

(DOOR OPENS: SOUND OF THE STREET FADE AND THE BABBLE OF THE STORE CROWD PREDOMINATES IN THE BACKGROUND: DOOR CLOSSES)

JERRY: Say, Jim. Isn't that Bill Thompson over there?

JIM: Yeah, let's move over that way.

JERRY: Did you know if he's heard from the insurance company about those cattle he lost in the fire?

JIM: No, I don't.

JERRY: He oughta know something by now. It was over two months ago.

JIM: Uhuh -- H'lo, Bill. How's everything?

BILL: Oh, hello there, Jim... Hi, Jerry.

JERRY: Hi, Bill.

JIM: Haven't seen you around, Bill.

BILL: Yeah, Jim, I been kinda busy the last couple of weeks.

JIM: Heard from the insurance company about those cattle you lost?

BILL: Well, there wasn't anything to hear, Jim.

JIM: How do you mean?

BILL: Well, my insurance run out before the cattle was burned up.

JERRY: Gee, that's tough, Bill.

BILL: I been wantin' to see you fellas. I'm gonna sell off the timber on my place. Gonna talk to a guy from the Stratton Lumber outfit after I leave here.



JIM: Sure, Bill. Want to make it later this afternoon?

BILL: Yeah. How about four o'clock?

JIM: That's good -- uh -- say, Bill -- Mary Halloway was tellin' me that your boy Billy hasn't been in school.

BILL: No, he hasn't, Jim -- We been -- Well, my wife she's been teachin' him at home --

JIM: I see -- Well, I was just wonderin' -- He kinda liked goin' to school. He's a mighty smart boy, you know.

BILL: (LOWERING HIS VOICE) Well -- to tell you the truth, Jim -- You know us folks in Douglas County have to pay a tuition fee to send our kids into town to school, and I ain't been able to scrape it together -- It ain't very much, but -- well --

JIM: I know things have been goin' kinda rough lately, Bill. If there's anything I can do --

BILL: Thanks, Jim, but if I can get any kind of a price for my timber maybe things'll be lookin' up for us.

JIM: That's good -- You know, I think the school-board would be glad to let that tuition ride for a while --

JERRY: Sure they would, Bill.





BILL: I s'pose they would -- but -- the kid ain't got any clothes to wear, not even a new pair of overalls -- My wife figured it'd be better to keep him at home for a while. She thinks the other kids at school would laugh at him because of his clothes -- I don't know, I s'pose she's right.

JIM: He's a mighty proud little rascal.

BILL: Yep, he is -- My wife and me figured there wasn't any good keepin' it from him so one night about a week before school was to start we told him we was awful broke and maybe he couldn't go to school for a while -- He kinda blinked a couple of tears, and then he said he'd stay home and help me work on the place.

JIM: By golly, that's just like him.

BILL: I rode in today, so's he could ride with me on his pony. He's likely out back waitin' for me now.

JIM: Well, Jim, we'll be lookin' for you at the office around four.

BILL: Thanks, Jim.

JIM: (FADING) Come on, Jerry. Let's go back to the loading platform to see if our rope's come in.

CROWD FADES OUT: DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES

JERRY: (PAUSE - FADING IN) It should have come in on the way freight this noon.

JIM: I told Andy to leave it out here so we could load it right into our pick-up.





JERRY: I can come down for it this afternoon.

JIM: All right -- Say, isn't that Billy's pony over there at the hitching rack?

JERRY: Looks like it.

DOOR OPENS AND CLOSES:

JIM: Well, hello there, young fella.

BILLY: H'lo, Mr. Robbins. (FADING) I gotta be goin'.

JIM: Whoa. Hey, wait a minute.

BILLY: (OFF) I'm lookin' for my dad.

JERRY: We just saw him in the store.

JIM: Why haven't you been up to the station to see me lately?

BILLY: (FADING IN) I been kinda busy, Mr. Robbins, helpin' my dad.

JIM: Oh, I see.

BILLY: I haven't been going to school this year. He needs me to help him at home.

JIM: Well, he's lucky to have a good man working for him.

BILLY: I expect maybe I'll have to go back to school -- maybe pretty soon my dad says.

JERRY: Miss Halloway asked this morning if we'd seen you.

BILLY: Did she?

JIM: Yep. She was wonderin' if you were sick.

BILLY: If you see her again will you tell her I'll be back as soon as I can?

JIM: Sure will.



BILLY: Thanks -- Mr. Robbins do you think the other kids would -- would they laugh at me because I ain't goin' to school now?

JIM: No, they wouldn't do anything like that.

JERRY: I'll bet they all envy you, Billy. Don't you have a lot of fun staying home all day?

BILLY: It was fun at first. But not anymore.

JIM: Well, as soon as you get done helping your dad, we'll expect to see you around more.

BILLY: Yes sir. I'll be around.

MUSIC UP AND OUT:

JIM: Well, what kind of a price did the Stratton outfit make you, Bill?

BILL: Not to good, Jim. I was hopin' I could get enough to pay off most of what I owe and have a little somethin' over.

JERRY: That's a good piece of timber you've got on your place.

BILL: That's what they said at the Stratton outfit. But they only offered me seven hundred dollars.

JIM: How much timber do you figure you've got, Bill?

BILL: I don't know, Jim. I had the fella from Stratton's come out and look at it last week.

JIM: Didn't you take an estimate of it yourself?

BILL: Naw, I don't know nothin' about estimatin' timber.

JIM: We'd be glad to loan you a timber scale. Or you could do it fairly well without one. It's easy enough.

BILL: I just sold it all to 'em in a lump.



JERRY: You mean all the timber you've got?

BILL: Yeah. I gotta get hold of some money somehow. I don't like to sell all of it --

JIM: The price he gave you means he's figuring on doing the cutting and hauling himself, doesn't it?

BILL: I s'pose it does.

JIM: Ever think of doing the cutting yourself?

BILL: Well, no, Jim -- I didn't. One man couldn't do it alone.

JIM: No, but you'd save the price of your own labor, if you did the cutting. It'd be just that much money in your pocket.

BILL: I didn't think about that.

JERRY: You could do the hauling, too, couldn't you Bill?

BILL: Sure, I've got a truck. But who'd buy the timber if I was to cut and haul it?

JIM: I reckon the Stratton outfit would be glad to buy it that way just as quick as they would any other way.

BILL: Think they would?

JIM: They made a contract last week with Herb Wilson to take all the timber he could cut off his farm. And he's going to sell 'em about three or four loads of fence posts, too.

BILL: Say, I could do the same thing. I got plenty of small stuff in my stand that'd make good fenceposts.





JIM: But the most important thing for you to remember, Bill, is to leave a few trees for seeding. And you oughta let the smaller ones mature before you take 'em out.

BILL: But I need the money right now, Jim.

JIM: I know. But if you do your own cutting and hauling you'll make more money on the sale of your timber and you won't have to strip your whole plot.

BILL: Doggone it, Jim, that sounds like sense to me.

JIM: If you cut all your trees, Bill, it'd be another 50 years before you could grow a crop like you've got now. It takes a mighty long time to grow merchantable timber.

BILL: I know it does, Jim.

JIM: If you save enough for another crop later, then you'll always have a sort of a bank account you can draw on, just like you're doing now.

BILL: That's what I'll do, Jim. But do you think the Stratton outfit will make me a deal like this?

JIM: What say we go talk to them right now -- I'll go along with you.

MUSIC UP AND OUT:

ANNOUNCER: Uncle Sam's Forest Rangers comes to you every Friday on the Farm and Home Hour through the courtesy of the National Broadcasting Company with the cooperation of the United States Forest Service.

